

**Appendix G*

Division Support Command, Airborne Division

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ROLE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE AIRBORNE DIVISION

The role of the airborne division is to plan, coordinate, and execute a rapid, combined arms, and forced entry operation employed alone or as part of a joint task force across the depth and width of the battlefield. The airborne division is unique in its ability to be deployed by parachute to achieve objectives. The airborne force commander task organizes Army elements within an airborne force into the following three echelons.

ASSAULT ECHELON

The assault echelon comprises those forces required to seize the assault objective and the initial airhead, plus their immediate reserves and essential logistics forces. The division readiness force and the division readiness brigade, unique to the airborne division, are quick reactionary forces designed for airborne operations. These forces are tailored based on all of the factors of METT-T and typically include elements from the FSB as discussed later in this appendix. A detachment of the quartermaster airdrop equipment support company enters the objective area in the assault echelon to advise the units in the recovery and evacuation of airdrop equipment from the drop zone.

FOLLOW-ON ECHELON

The airborne forces do not need the follow-on echelon in the objective area during the initial assault but do need it for subsequent operations. When needed, the follow-on echelon enters the objective area as soon as possible by air, surface movement, or a combination of the two. It includes additional vehicles and equipment from assault echelon units, plus more combat, combat support, and combat service support units. The means of transportation used influences the composition of the follow-on echelon.

REAR ECHELON

The rear echelon includes part of the DISCOM force left in the departure area that is not considered essential for initial combat operations. It has administrative and service elements not immediately needed in the objective area that can function more efficiently in the departure area. In long duration operations, the rear echelon can be brought into the airhead to support subsequent operations.

ORGANIZATION AND OPERATIONS OF DISCOM

The basic organization of the airborne DISCOM is the same as the DISCOM organization discussed in Chapter 2. However, the airborne DISCOM has a quartermaster airdrop equipment support company and a light and a heavy maintenance company in the MSB versus a single maintenance company in the light infantry division. The organization is shown at Figure G-1.

The DISCOM commander of the airborne division also divides his elements into the three echelons for support (assault, follow-on, and rear). He tailors support for each echelon based on the factors of METT-T; such as personnel and equipment to be supported, number of airframes available, and size of operation. Just as the airborne force is tailored for airdrop or

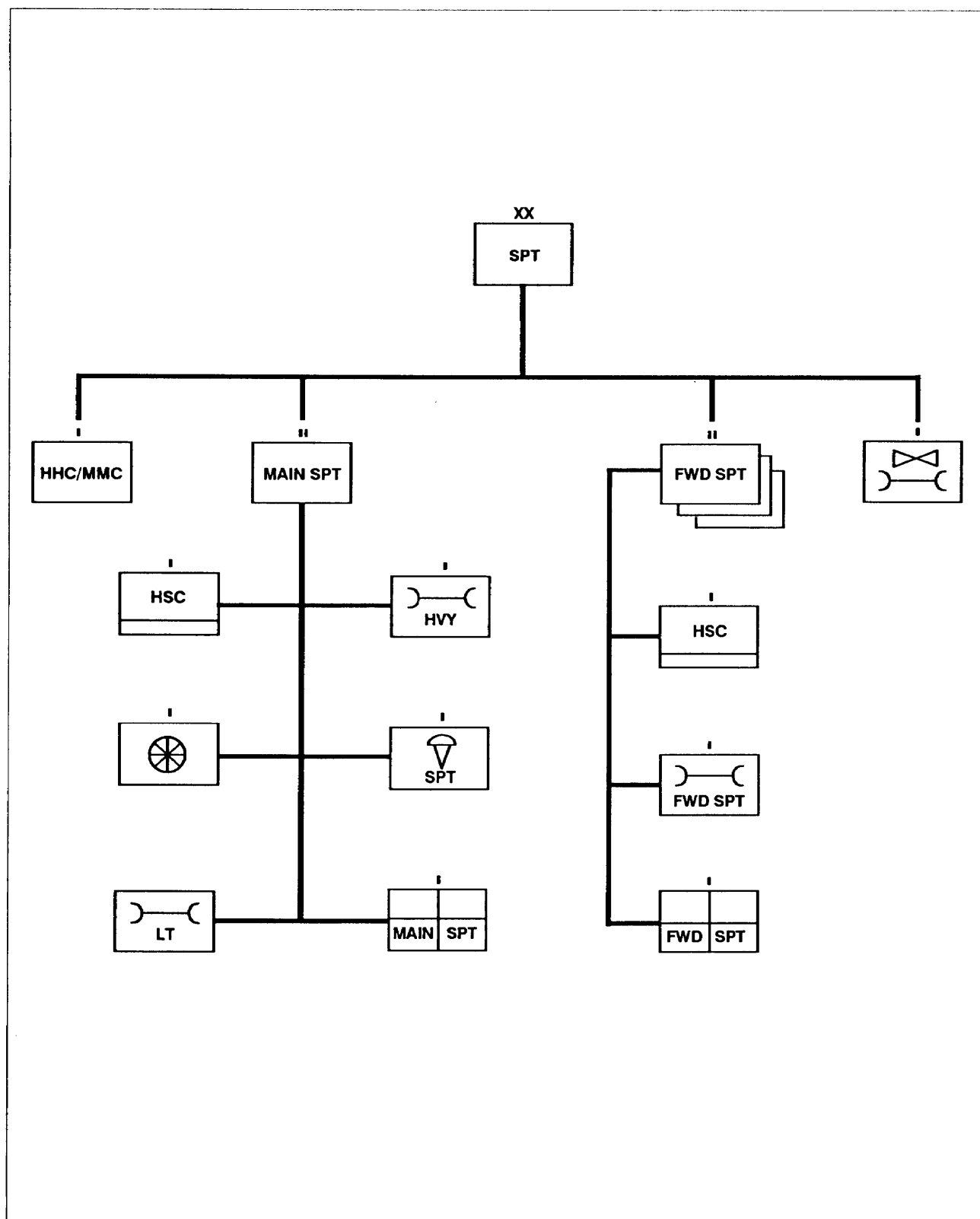


Figure G-1. Airborne DISCOM.

airland combat operations, logistics is tailored to support the airhead or lodgment by airdrop, airland, overland, or sea. Critical support elements from the FSB such as Class III, V, VIII, and IX supply elements are typically in the assault echelon, and the remaining FSB assets enter during the follow-on echelon. In the case of a full-division deployment, key elements from the MSB and aviation maintenance company are in the follow-on echelon, and the remaining MSB and AMCO elements remain with the rear echelon. Planners must also ensure adequate command and control assets are included with each echelon to control logistics elements on the ground and coordinate all logistics activities. In the assault phase and early in the follow-on phase, elements of the FSB HSC may be sufficient to perform these roles. However, in some cases, personnel from

the DISCOM headquarters may have to deploy in these early echelons to perform functions for which the FSB headquarters has no expertise. If host-nation support is a major factor, DISCOM personnel are likely to have more expertise to coordinate the effort.

In any case, the logistics C2 element expands as the size of logistics force on the ground grows. At all times the deployed logistics force must maintain contact with its supporting element whether that element is the rear echelon of the DISCOM or, in the case of a fully deployed division, the sustainment base of the next higher echelon, whatever that may be at the time. The critical component in maintaining this constant link is assured communications.

ARMING

CLASS V

When the division is fully deployed, a nondivision ordnance company establishes an ATP in the division rear to support any division elements operating in the rear. The FSB headquarters and supply companies have assets to establish an ATP in each BSA. Even in operations involving less than a fully deployed division, the FSB would establish an ATP in the BSA to transload ammunition arriving from EAD. In the assault phase or early in the follow-on phase, the DISCOM may pool assets from more than one FSB ATP section to establish an ad hoc ammunition supply point. An ATP does not store ammunition but in the early stages of an airborne operation storage may be required until a transload system can be established.

CLASS IV

Units carry a limited amount of Class IV into the objective area. Careful choice of drop and assault landing zones reduces the amount of Class IV necessary to support the operation by minimizing the requirement for construction equipment and material. The division commander determines the Class IV stockage in the division and the DMMC manages Class IV stockage. There is no specified division-level reserve for Class IV supplies. Class IV stockage capabilities are extremely limited, and DSA supply points stock them only when required to support a specific operation. Units use local resources for Class IV whenever possible.

FIXING

Maintenance problems are magnified in the airborne division by the scarcity of maintenance personnel in the objective area during the assault phase and by the possible damage to equipment during air drop operations.

GROUND MAINTENANCE

Maintenance personnel organic to the airborne battalions and separate companies along with limited critical elements from the FSB perform maintenance during the initial assault. The remainder of the FSB maintenance company plus other designated individuals and equipment from the MSB maintenance companies

enter the objective area in the follow-on echelon. These maintenance personnel provide direct support of primary weapons systems and communications equipment. They carry fast-moving Class IX items and use maintenance support teams extensively to perform on-site repairs.

After the build-up of the airhead (assault phase), the remaining direct support maintenance elements are deployed. Once the division is fully deployed, the FSB maintenance company performs direct support maintenance for division units in the brigade area and

the MSB maintenance company provides direct support maintenance for division units in the division rear as discussed in Chapter 10. The MSB maintenance companies provide reinforcing DS to the forward support maintenance company. Nondivisional maintenance assets provide reinforcing DS to the division.

AVIATION MAINTENANCE

Extensive maintenance is performed prior to the start of the operation and only operator/crew maintenance is performed by the crews during the assault phase. The AVUM company from the aviation brigade provides support during the follow-on phase. Critical AVIM elements arrive during this phase and provide reinforcing AVUM and limited AVIM during this stage. As the lodgment expands, corps slices are tailored into the force for support.

FUELING

CLASS III (BULK)

Vehicles are filled to USAF specifications (usually one-half to three-quarters of a full tank) prior to loading on the aircraft. Inspected fuel cans filled with fuel can also be loaded on the aircraft. Bulk fuel in "bladder birds" can be loaded on aircraft if desired by the commander. Once the follow-on echelon forces arrive, fuel and lubricant supplies arrive as packaged products. As the operation matures, fuel is usually delivered in bulk. Throughput distribution and supply point distribution are performed as described in Chapter 9.

CLASS VII

Operations are the same as discussed in Chapter 10 with the exception that while an operational readiness float exists in peacetime, only the LID maintains an ORF in wartime.

CLASS IX

The MSB light maintenance company receives and issues common and missile repair parts required by its maintenance activities. It receives, stores, maintains, and manages repairable. The FSB maintenance company maintains a stock of repair parts and maintenance-related supplies to support its own maintenance activities. It also carries a stock of demand supported and combat critical Class IX items for issue to supported units.

CLASS III (PACKAGED)

See Chapter 9.

MOVING

AIR

The DISCOM staff makes extensive plans for resupply of airborne forces using airdrop, airland, and helicopter operations. The US Air Force transports most personnel, supplies, and equipment in all three echelons during an airborne operation. The airborne division relies on its organic quartermaster airdrop equipment support company for rigging support. The G4 coordinates for aircraft for routine resupply missions. Aircraft for emergency resupply missions are coordinated through the G3. The division aviation brigade also provides some aircraft support to include limited transportation for personnel, supplies, and equipment. Corps aircraft deliver in theater any

emergency resupply to the lowest possible support element in the division. CSS personnel should cross-load follow-on supplies to offset loss of one type of item if aircraft are lost.

GROUND

Once on the ground, the airborne form has limited tactical ground mobility for both personnel and equipment. Mobility depends on the numbers and types of ground vehicles that can be brought into or seized within the objective area. Captured enemy vehicles are used to supplement limited transportation resources. Efficient use of organic transportation is essential. Ground transportation is the same as described in Chapter 11.

SUSTAINING SOLDIERS AND THEIR SYSTEMS

HEALTH SERVICE SUPPORT

Health service support conserves the fighting strength (trained manpower) of the airborne force allowing the commander to maintain maximum combat power. The DMOC and the support operations sections of the MSB and the FSBs plan for medical operations before insertion of the division into an area of operation. Anticipated casualty rates and disease threats dictate the extent of initial and subsequent HSS required by the division. During the planning process, HSS planners also consider the limited number of tactical/strategic airframes, the limited duration of the operation and the special nature of the mission; such as hostage rescue and withdrawal operations. HSS personnel and equipment can be deployed into the operational area by parachute or by air landing.

CLASS VIII

HSS personnel rely upon palletized or containerized air delivery of supplies and equipment, both for initial deployment and subsequent resupply. The division and unit medical treatment elements stock a limited amount of Class VIII, with the DMSO maintaining a larger amount of Class VIII. Resupply is first made by push

packages while the follow-on echelon is deploying. Door bundles are prepared for packaged Class VIII supplies, including IV solutions and bandages. These bundles are distributed among aircraft to prevent destruction by a single incident. Once the rear echelon is in place, normal supply procedures are followed. HSS personnel may use evacuation aircraft returning from EAD to provide urgently required Class VIII.

FOOD

Airborne units carry MREs when entering the objective area. Requests and supply flows are like those for the LID described in Chapter 7.

WATER

Airborne forces carry filled canteens, water purification tablets, and filters. Normally, they carry enough full organic water containers for travel to the airhead. CSS planners determine the location of possible water points. Water purification and storage assets are in the MSB HSC.